italienne, ces *convegni internazionali* ne tardèrent pas à avoir une ample résonance dans les milieux dédiés à l'étude de la Renaissance et de l'humanisme en général.

Depuis mars 1988, Giovannangiola Tarugi n'est plus. En un geste de pitié, il fut décidé que le centre d'études mettrait fin à ses activités, du moins sous son appellation d'origine.

Paul O. Kristeller, qui assumait la présidence effective des congrès de 1968 à 1970, leur donna une nouvelle impulsion en les orientant vers une étude plus systématique de la "*Civiltà dell'umanesimo*", chaque congrès subséquent développant un aspect particulier de cette vaste thématique. C'est ainsi que, groupés sous le titre significatif de *homo sapiens*, *Homo humanus*, les quatre derniers congrès, placés sous la présidence du regretté Sesto Prete, se proposaient successivement l'étude de "*La cultura italiana tra il passato ed il presente in un disegno di pace universale*", "*La pienezza del significato Homo sapiens e la necessaria ricerca del significato Homo humanus*", "*Letteratura, arte e scienza nella seconda metà del Quattrocento*" et, enfin, thème du dernier congrès, "*Individuo e società nei secoli XV^e XVI^e*". Vaste panorama donc, au contenu très riche auquel il est malheureusement impossible de rendre ici justice par l'analyse détaillée qu'il mériterait.

Signalons, en présentation de ces volumes et de la plume de son époux, l'ingénieur Luigi Lorenzo Secchi, une intéressante et émouvante biographie de Giovannangiola Tarugi, dont l'animation des *convegni* ne représente qu'une partie, si importante soit-elle, des activités de recherche, d'étude et d'écriture, menées à bien durant une longue et fructueuse carrière. C'est ce dont témoigne la bibliographie que l'on trouve également ici. Notons encore, à titre de référence, que cette présentation donne un survol des différents thèmes abordés en particulier par chacun de ces trente congrès.

LOUIS VALCKE, *Université de Sherbrooke*

Rewriting the Renaissance. The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe, edited by Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy J. Vickers. *Women in Culture and Society*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1986. Pp. xxxi, 426.

In the last few years there has been a marked trend in scholarly publishing towards essay collections which address a specific problem or theme. Frequently these collections are heralded as 'interdisciplinary essays' although usually they are in fact multidisciplinary. The distinction is an important one to bear in mind when approaching such collections. The reader who expects the exciting application of truly innovative and interdisciplinary methodology may be disappointed to find

instead a collection of essays drawn from a cross-section of traditional disciplines. The usefulness of such multidisciplinary collections is, of course, unquestionable and their very appearance goes a long way to highlight the need to address historical problems from a variety of angles. There is, however, always the risk of disappointment, especially when such a collection is unbalanced and leans toward one discipline or another.

Such is the initial reaction upon reading through the essays gathered in *Rewriting the Renaissance*. The collection is an important one, as is to be expected from any volume included in the prestigious "Women in Culture and Society" series. But ultimately this collection will be of more interest to scholars of literature and of the English Renaissance, than, for example, those interested in women's history and literature or even broad questions of gender in Renaissance society. Of the eighteen essays presented, thirteen are literary criticism, three discuss art history, and two are historical. Even the writers studied lean toward the predictable canon of Renaissance literature: Shakespeare (five essays), Milton (two essays), Spenser, Sidney, and Rabelais (one essay each). The imbalance is perpetuated in the geographical settings of the essays: eleven England, three France, two Italy, one Germany, and one both France and Italy. Thus the volume's sweep is not as broad nor its approach quite as innovative as the promise held out by its ambitious title.

The editors' introduction provides an intelligent and thoughtful survey of approaches to women in the Renaissance from Burckhardt to the present. They identify the need to use an interdisciplinary perspective to address the questions that are increasingly preoccupying early modern scholars: "how did relations between the sexes influence, and how were they influenced by, the new economic, social, and political arrangements of the early modern period?" (xx-xxi). And for the most part, though generally confined behind the traditional boundaries of discipline, the essays address questions of the sex-gender system, sometimes through the application of newer approaches such as deconstruction or psychoanalysis, sometimes through lenses informed by feminism or Marxism, sometimes through the traditional channels of literary criticism.

The index is useful for the browser or for those intent on tracking one particular subject. Of immense use is the Selected Bibliography which covers some 19 pages. It is organized by subject, comprehensive, and up-to-date. It alone could serve as a bibliographical introduction to Renaissance women's studies. It at once supplements and is supplemented by the notes to the individual essays.

In all, *Rewriting the Renaissance* is a volume that every Renaissance scholar should know about. The essays are strong, most appear here for the first time, and there is sure to be at least one that can contribute to an individual's research. The volume's intent is to broaden our historical perspective; its challenge, that we modify the very way in which we approach the past: "these

essays invite the reader to consider historical documents and aesthetic works no longer as isolated objects of specialized study but now as parts of a social text—a text constituted not only by economic forces and class ideologies but also by the complex ideologies of sexual difference” (xxxix). Can the past ever be the same again? Not if *Rewriting the Renaissance* is any indication of the new direction in which scholarship is headed.

JACQUELINE MURRAY, *University of Windsor*

German Mystical Writings, edited by Karen J. Campbell; Foreword by Carol Zaleski. The German Library 5, New York: Continuum, 1991, Pp. XI, 269.

This edition of *German Mystical Writings* is one of the latest in a proposed series of one hundred volumes, whose aim it is to publish representative examples of German literature from its earliest beginnings to the present. Within the pre-Fifteen-hundreds period, some examples of medieval narrative have appeared, including *Tristan and Isolde*, as well as a volume on *German Humanism and Reformation*. By choosing German mysticism, the editor has focused on a field to which little attention has been paid by contemporary researchers, but which nevertheless represents an area of world literature in which Germany has made a significant contribution. While tendencies towards mysticism exist in practically all major world religions, regardless of time period or geographical region, in christianity, it tends to be a phenomenon more commonly found in southern and western Europe (cf. Bernard de Clairvaux, Teresa de Avila), Germany being the notable exception to this rule. Whether or not German mysticism represents, as the “Foreword” claims, “the most remarkable flowering of mystical speculation in the Christian West” (XII) is debatable, but there cannot be any doubt that it provides some of its finest examples. Of these, the editor has made a judicious selection. The works presented span a full five hundred years and provide a well-balanced sampling of German mystical writings. They take us from the medieval world of Hildegard von Bingen to the threshold of the Enlightenment, with the late Baroque poetry of Angelus Silesius. Not only has the editor’s selection provided an excellent historical overview, but she has also been able to capture the two major branches of German mysticism: its sensitive and its speculative aspects, aspects which the “Foreword” terms “bridal mysticism (Brautmystik)” and “mysticism of being (Wesensmystik)”.

The actual texts are preceded by a “Foreword” which makes an especially valid point by explaining that the aforementioned separation of the two branches of mysticism is somewhat artificial as they are compatible, mutually complementary, and indeed, historically intertwined. In her “Introduction”, J. Campbell provides a good general definition along with a concise history of the movement, and also